The University of Nottingham Concordat Implementation Action Plan 2011-2015

-progress report for the time period 2013-15 (September 2015)

The internal evaluation of The University of Nottingham's Concordat Implementation Action Plan (2011-2014) was conducted by the Research Staff Group (RSG) and reported to Research Board in May 2013. The RSG is chaired by the Dean of the Graduate School and includes representatives from Research Staff (faculty reps, senior research staff rep), Careers and Employability Service, Graduate School, Human Resources, Professional Development and Women in Science Engineering and Technology Group (WinSET) and reports to the University's Research Board. The group have also received input from academic schools and other professional services which has fed into this evaluation.

Researchers' views have been taken into account during this review through input from the research staff representatives on the RSG (who represent both school and faculty Research Staff Networks), consideration of the results of The University of Nottingham 2011 Staff Survey and 2013 Careers in Research Online Surveys.

This document outlines the ongoing and new actions in The University of Nottingham's Concordat Implementation Action Plan identified for the remaining reporting period 2013-15. The original action plan (2011-15), 2 year internal review summary (September 2013) can be downloaded at http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/researchstaff/concordat/researchconcordat.aspx.

Abbreviations

APR   Activity Performance Review

APRC Activity Performance Review Committee

BEIS   Business Engagement and Innovation Services

CES   Careers and Employability Service

CROS Careers in Research Online Survey

FSWG Fellowships Working Group

GS   Graduate School

HR   Human Resources

PD   Professional Development

PDPR   Professional Development and Performance Review

PI   Principal Investigators

PIRLS Principal Investigators and Research Leaders Survey

RB   Research Board

RGS   Research and Graduate Services

RSG   Research Staff Group

WinSET Women in Science, Engineering and Technology

Key

🟩	Action completed
	Action completed with ongoing activity actions
🟨	Action ongoing/new

Principle 1: Recruitment and selection

Action	Lead	Progress	Further information
Recruitment and selection The role of HR in supporting recruitment activities will be assessed as part of the business process project to include harmonisation of support for researcher recruitment.	HR	**COMPLETED:** November 2013 A new online recruitment system was rolled out in November 2013. All recruitment of staff (all job families) occurs through the recruitment system offering transparency and accountability.	https://jobs.nottingham.ac.uk/Registration/

Principle 2: Recognition and value

Action	Lead	Progress	Further information
Fellowships Strategy The University will implement its 2011 Fellowships Strategy and report progress to RB and RSG. *Success indicators:* Increase in numbers of fellowship applications, internal and external applicants. Reduction in conversion ratio of applications to externally-funded fellowships.	FSWG-disbanded RSG-Research Policy Officer	**COMPLETED Implemented from 2013** Changes to the Nottingham Research Fellowships and Anne McLaren Fellowships. • 3 year fellowship (increased from 2 years) and up to £5k per annum taxable child care costs • A grant of up to £25k per fellow to fund research costs • The linking of the fellowship to an academic appointment subject to a high level of performance and the right to work in the UK *Recruitment/Application* Since the last reporting period, applicants have been required to discuss their research proposals with their potential host school, and then submit an expression of interest. This stage has been included due to high demand for the scheme and to ensure that the applicant's research interests fit with those of the school. The conversion rate of application to externally funded fellowships is currently being explored as part of the wider University Research Strategy. Metrics will be collected in relation to success rates for external fellowships (where possible). Monitoring data on gender, international applications and external/internal candidates will be collated at the Expression of Interest stage. This will be reported to the university's Research Board in May each year	University-funded fellowships and externally funded fellow guidance and support webpages http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/research/fellowships/index.aspx

			and will be an agenda item at the Summer Term research staff group. *Current Fellows* In 2013 the Fellows Network was established to provide internally and externally funded Fellows networking and professional development opportunities. The events calendar offers professional development training/opportunities specifically tailored to early, mid and late stage fellows. Example of events, • CASCADE fellows- sandpit event in September 2015 • Fellows' network invited to participate as peer reviewers for Bridging the Gaps: NGF award. Providing experience of funding panel peer review.	
Bridging funding The University should, where appropriate, monitor and share practices related to bridging funding. *Success indicators:* Increased availability of bridging funding. Increase in quantity and quality of research outputs (papers, grants) resulting from bridging funding period and other scheme awards.	Schools/Faculties		**ONGOING** The University has a well-established track record of interdisciplinary and bridging funding for research-only staff, *Schemes 2013-15* **Bridging the Gaps: Next Generation Feasibility Award** (semester 1 & 2 2013/2014). Example of known research outputs: journal articles 2 (4 in preparation). To date, at least two award recipients progressed to tenured academic positions. **UNICAS-Graduate School sandpit and pump-prime funding** (3 events and funding rounds 2013/14 and 2014/15 focussed on the University's Research Priority areas (2010-15). Dedicated stream for postdoc and	UNICAS scheme http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/fabs/rgs/equipment/unicas/unicas.aspx

			postgrad researchers. Research staff also eligible for UNICAS sandpit funding with academic co-applicants. All fund recipients are requested to submit final project reports and to include research outputs (1 month and 12 month post-project due late 2015). *Schemes 2015 onwards* Scheme to continue in 2015/16 with themed sandpits focussing on the University's 2015-20 research themes. Success outcomes restricted to publication on University intranet due to sensitive nature of pilot work. **Discipline Bridging Awards (DBA)** Bid for funding up to £25k for programmes to be spent within a 12-month period. The DBA will fund innovative programmes of people-based activities that will stimulate innovative approaches to research collaboration between disciplines and potentially lead to a step-change towards the creation of world-class multidisciplinary research collaborations.	
Redeployment opportunities The University should monitor Research Staff engagement with redeployment processes and opportunities, and seek to increase uptake. *Success indicators:* Year on year increase in applications for redeployment. Where appropriate the successful retention of staff through the redeployment process.	HR		**Monitoring in place and report commissioned by RSG annually.** Report findings are made available to faculty representatives on RSG to disseminate to communities/within faculty. In line with the HE sector, Research Staff still remain the lowest uptake of all family groups. Preliminary analysis of CROS 2015 data indicates that staff are aware of this opportunity; 15% indicated that they had engaged with the redeployment pool, 31% had indicated that they had not undertaken it would like to and 53% indicated the process	

		was currently of no interest .	
PDPR process A review of the new PDPR process by HR and the development of a research staff focussed competency framework aligned to the RDF and institutional promotions criteria which will support research staff and their reviewers with the career and professional development elements of the PDPR process.	HR	**COMPLETED** Review conducted early 2013 University wide competency framework introduced in Spring 2013 PDPR. 2013 onwards: Promotions' criteria revised to include specific research activity performance indicators/standards. In CROS 2013, 91.8% of respondents reported that they had completed a staff appraisal in the last two years. Of these, 52% reported that they found the overall process useful or very useful.	http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/hr/guidesandsupport/performanceatwork/index.aspx

Principles 3 & 4: Support and Career Development

Action	Lead	Progress	Further information
Review development activities The University will undertake a review of its formal and informal development activities and provision for Research Staff against the RDF/RDS as part of its biennial analysis of the implementation of the Concordat.	GS	**COMPLETED with ongoing monitoring.** University adopted the Vitae RDF planner in 2014. Training and access to the planner offered to all researchers at Nottingham. Currently 37% of RDF planner users are research staff. Expansion of Research staff only training courses continues, including online provision: Recent additions include: • ECR Leadership programme • Professional leadership skills in HE (online) • Research Staff writing retreat (pilot) • Supervising Doctoral Studies (online) • Public engagement • Writing about impact	
Monitoring promotion outcomes RSG to monitor promotion trends for Research Staff, through annually-commissioned HR report. *Success indicators:* Provide transparency to Research Staff community on promotion success rates through published data.	RSG	**COMPLETED Reporting structures in place. Annual, report commissioned for first RSG meeting (semester 1) with appropriate actions identified** Report is included as standing agenda item at the first RSG meeting annually. Report is provided to RS representatives for dissemination to cohort.	

Mentoring scheme Mentor forums, not 1-to-1 mentoring, are being explored as an alternative offering for research staff.	RSG		**Gap analysis undertaken across all faculties to access current formal and informal mentor schemes open to research staff.** Analysis commissioned as part of Athena SWAN. 2014/15: Pilot mentor schemes exist at the School-level (Biosciences). Fellows network, mentoring. All Fellows are provided guidance and support in their induction period to identify and engage a mentor. Mentor relationships are not formalised and recorded.	
Guidance for research managers The RSG recommend that research managers and PIs should be provided with guidance and advice to support them in their role.	RSG		**ONGOING.** Ongoing and evolving to ensure changes in the research landscape are addressed and reflected. Annual item on RSG agenda with actions allocated as necessary. The Research Leaders Programme provides developmental training and opportunities for PIs. Aspects of the programme focus on leading and managing highly effective research teams.	
Specialised careers guidance The University should ensure that all Research Staff are made aware of the dedicated careers support and guidance available to them. CES to maintain and report on monitoring and evaluation of their services for research staff. *Success indicators:* Increased uptake of guidance appointments and increased attendance on career-focussed workshops.	CES		**Monitoring, evaluation and reporting processes in place. Report delivered to first RSG meeting (semester 1)** Individual guidance appointments: Individual guidance appointments offered by dedicated Senior Careers Advisor for Research Staff. The post holder also provides specialist careers service for PhD students	

		from all disciplines and therefore the maximum number of appointments offered annually is 92 based on two hourly appointments per week (although patterns week by week do vary due to other workload commitments). The take up of appointments has varied over the period 40% to 67%.	
Knowledge Exchange Framework Launch and implementation of the new Knowledge Exchange Framework highlighting the specific focus on research staff. *Success indicators:* Recognition of framework by Research Staff and implementation by community. Measured through reporting by BEIS.	BEIS/RGS	***In Progress-taken forward to 2015-2019 action plan.*** Due end of 2015. Report to be commissioned by RSG, semester 2, 2015.	

Principle 5: Researchers' responsibilities

Action	Lead	Progress	Further information
Personal, professional and career development opportunities Development of the programme of training and development for Research Staff with new courses specifically addressing topics prioritised by research staff in CROS 2013 including research data management and research impact. *Success indicators:* Delivery of workshops with positive feedback from participants	GS (RGS)	**Annual monitoring completed.** New series of Research Data Management workshops for researchers to commenced in November 2013. Provision is both face to face delivery and online course. Research data showcase: public facing website showcasing case studies of RDM best practice. CROS 2013 responses highlighted that researchers wished to undertake the following activities, of which new development opportunities have now been scheduled: • Public engagement: Annual research showcase opened to research staff • Grant writing: Research Staff conference 2015 included workshop on writing a business case. Various Fellowship workshops (e.g. Arts and SS Bid Bootcamp). Peer review mock panels open to research staff. • Publication writing: Research Staff Writing Retreat included workshop on • Leadership: online Professional Research Leaders course CROS 2013 highlighted that 64% of respondents have completed between 1-5 days of training in the last 12 months. 28%	

			of researchers completed 5 or more days of professional development.	
Cross intuitional activities Expansion and development of the pilot Research leadership programme for Research Staff with Birmingham. *Success indicators:* Increased cohort size, promotion of scheme to under-represented disciplines with increase in numbers.	RGS and PD		**Annual intake with monitoring.** Due to the success of the pilot Early Career Research Leadership Programme. A joint leadership programme with the university of Birmingham. The scheme has been expanded to an annual intake and will be embedded in the University's Strategy 2020 This programme continues to be successful with good cohort numbers from both institutions. Researchers must secure the support of their Head of School as sponsor on the programme. In 2015, the cohort reached its capacity of Nottingham 20 participants.	
Mobility schemes and opportunities Promotion of mobility schemes and opportunities at the University's international campuses/partners including the EU Co-fund scheme. *Success indicators*: Introduction of additional activities promoting schemes (semester 2, annually) and increase in demand/applications for funds. Increased mobility of researchers.	RGS		**Publicity of schemes ongoing.** Annual item on RSG agenda with actions allocated as necessary.	

Principle 6: Equality and Diversity

Action	Lead	Progress	Further information
Athena SWAN Silver University Award University Action Plan to be fully implemented in accordance with planned timescale *Success indicators:* Completion of action points in accordance with planned timescales. Building on and retention of silver award.	University Self-Assessment Team (USAT)	**Successful application or award 2012. ONGOING and completed implementation of actions** The University was awarded a Silver award in September 2012, which covers a four year implementation timeframe. The USAT meets quarterly to discuss implementation and subsequent actions required, and reports directly to Research Board. USAT comprises a diverse range of colleagues from across the University from both professional services and academic schools. Representatives also include members of Research Staff. Details of the successes and news on progress made with the actions identified in the 2012 award documentation are highlighted on the WiNSET webpages and disseminated through University communication channels to all staff. The University will be applying for the institutional Silver award using the new Athena SWAN guidance and forms. As a result of the introduction of the new requirements, the university will be applying for a new award rather than renewal. The application will be submitted in April 2016, to include implementation plans for a four years period with up to 2020.	Current Athena Swan successes including the institutional 2012 action plan, http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/winset/athena-swan.aspx

		Example successes: • E&D best practice. Analysis and improvement of availability of female and BME role models in Image Bank stock images. (Marketing and Communications) • E&D events. Pilot WiNSET conference 2015 'Elevating voices'. http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/computerscience/events/elevating-voices-winset-conference-2015.aspx Conference open to all staff 11/98 attendees were Research Staff. To improve visibility and attendance, Graduate School to include advertisements in RS newsletter and social media for future events.	
Athena SWAN School/Faculty Awards Individual school Athena SWAN Bronze and Silver action plans to be implemented. Awards to be renewed and upgraded when current award expires.	Award holding schools	**COMPLETED and ONGOING according to award timelines for individual schools** STEMM School Athena Swann panels include research staff members to ensure representation from this staff grouping. Ongoing preparation by non-STEMM schools for inclusion in the award. Non-STEM schools will be eligible to submit for awards from November 2015.	
ALL STEMM Schools within the University to have applied for Athena Awards *Success indicators:* All STEMM schools to complete preparation for submission of application	School Self - Assessment Teams	**COMPLETED with new actions identified** Currently all schools eligible for AS badging have submitted applications. Of those that have applied only 2 schools remain without an award and will submit shortly prior to the institution application for Silver award.	

Principle 7: Implementation and Review

Action	Lead	Progress		Further information
European Commission HR Excellence in Research Award The University will undertake gap analyses and progress activities required to maintain the HR Excellence in Research Award. Maximising the promotion of the 'HR Excellence' badge for recruitment *Success indicators:* Timely completion of all actions in line with expected deadlines, identified through RSG commissioned reports. On-going identification of new and evolving actions to ensure changes in the research landscape are addressed and reflected.	RSG/RB/HR		**Reporting commissioned annually as matters arise.** Annual gap analysis, semester 2. Reporting by identified communities to RSG at meeting 2 annually. The Concordat Implementation action plan remains a standard item on the RSG agenda. RSG request reports according to the implementation action plan as well as matters arising. Regular reporting includes promotion figures, redeployment pool uptake, staff numbers per faculty and uptake of career guidance appointments.	

Concordat implementation and evaluation
The University will conduct a biennial survey of schools' practices in relation to the Concordat which will be used to:
  i. Monitor progress and developments at a local-level;
  ii. Identify and share good practice within the Institution.
 	
Success indicators: Increased communication across faculties regarding good-practice. Development of best-practice frameworks within faculties.
	RSG		**Report commissioned for first RSG meeting 2015.** Communities requested to report on progress of actions for which they are identified as the lead. Identification of best practice recorded in RSG minutes and disseminated by representatives. Actions arising from discussions assigned.	

Staff engagement survey The RSG will commission a report to analyse the research staff responses to the 2012 institutional staff engagement survey. In addition, the RSG will commission a report to analyse the CROS 2013 responses. *Success indicators:* Increase in responses to survey and implementation of actions raised by both surveys.	RSG		**Staff engagement survey report - Autumn 2013** **CROS 2013 analysis and report –Spring 2014** CROS 2013 response rate was 18%. CROS 2015 response rate was 28%. New strategies for dissemination used for the CROS 2015 survey: targeted individual emails to researchers; school and faculty reminder emails from senior academics and reminder emails from RSG research staff representatives to their peers. Analysis of the CROS 2013 results was undertaken by the Graduate School and reported to RSG. Actions identified from the analysis lead to introduction of new development activities for research staff (see principle 5) and provided evidence of successful ventures.	